

CLAIMS

1. A heating unit for heating a patio, which heating unit comprises a heater portion which provides heat for the patio by burning gas from a gas container, and a meter, and the heating unit being such that the meter is a token-operated or coin-operated meter which allows the passage of gas from the gas container to the heater portion on receipt of at least one token or coin, and the passage of the gas is only for a predetermined time period after which at least one further token or coin is required for allowing the passage of more of the gas for a further predetermined time period.
2. A heating unit according to claim 1 in which the meter is such that each predetermined time period is the same.
3. A heating unit according to claim 2 in which the heating unit provides a predetermined minimum number of the same predetermined time periods when starting from a full quantity of gas in the gas container.
4. A heating unit according to any one of the preceding claims in which the meter is positioned between the heater portion and a base part of the heating unit.
5. A heating unit according to any one of the preceding claims and including the gas container.

6. A heating unit according to claims 4 and 5 which is of a pole-like appearance having the gas container as a tubular gas container at the base part of the heating unit, the heater portion at a top part of the heating unit, and the meter in a tubular conduit which extends between the gas container and the heater portion.

7. A heating unit according to any one of claims 1 – 4 which is such that it does not include the gas container, in which the heating unit has connector means for connecting to a gas container remote from the heating unit, and in which the gas container has supply means for supplying a plurality of the heating units.

8. A heating unit according to any one of the preceding claims in which the heater portion includes a reflector for reflecting downwardly heat from the heater portion.

9. A heating unit according to any one of the preceding claims and including securing means for securing the heating unit in a chosen position in order to prevent theft of the heating unit.

10. A heating unit according to claim 9 in which the securing means secures the heating unit to a floor of the patio.

11. A heating apparatus for heating a patio, which heating apparatus comprises a heating unit according to any one of the preceding claims, and token-dispensing means for dispensing tokens in response to payment.